

CALIFORNIA ENERGY COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONERS
1516 NINTH STREET
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814-5512



April 13, 2006

Name
County of XXXX
County Address

RE: Development of Statewide Guidelines for Reducing Wildlife Impacts from Wind Energy Development in California

Dear Sir or Madam:

The California Energy Commission, working with the California Department of Fish and Game, will develop statewide guidelines to help reduce the impacts of wind energy development to birds and bats. These voluntary guidelines will include pre-and post-construction monitoring protocols and suggested mitigation strategies. We will develop these guidelines using the best available science and a collaborative approach. The goal of the project is to encourage the development of wind energy in the state while minimizing impacts to wildlife. The Energy Commission's Renewables Committee will oversee this guideline development and intends to initiate a process in the next 30 days to assure open and active participation by all interested stakeholders and members of the public.

We are interested in your input in developing these guidelines. California counties are typically the lead agencies in permitting wind development, and we hope to provide you with science-based, voluntary guidelines that would be useful in your planning and permitting processes. We envision this process involving a Science Advisory Committee that will review drafts of the guidelines prepared by staff. Members will be asked to attend three to four meetings in the summer and fall of 2006, and to review and comment on successive drafts of the guidelines. Criteria for the Science Advisory Committee is enclosed. If you have suggestions as to who would be appropriate to serve as members for this Committee please contact us with the name, affiliation, mailing address, phone number, and e-mail address.

Drafts of the guidelines will also be available for your review and comment. If your county is interested in providing input into the development of the guidelines, please provide the name, mailing address, phone number, and e-mail address of your county's representative. Send this information to John Mathias (jmathias@energy.state.ca.us).

We look forward to working with you on this collaborative effort.

Sincerely,

JOHN L. GEESMAN
Commissioner

JACKALYNE PFANNENSTIEL
Vice Chair

Enclosures

ATTACHMENT A

SCIENCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SAC): CRITERIA AND DUTIES

The SAC shall consist of six to ten technical experts who have knowledge of wildlife issues relating to wind development. The role of the experts on the SAC is to contribute to the development of the science-based monitoring protocol and mitigation standards that will form the foundation of the guidelines. Experts on the SAC are charged with clarifying the current state of technical knowledge required by the guidelines, not with answering policy questions. The duties of the SAC members shall include:

- Review and revise successive drafts of the guidelines;
- Address information gaps and identify research that would help improve monitoring protocols and mitigation;
- Review and comment on science questions posed by the stakeholder group and the public;
- Evaluate scientific uncertainty and levels of risks.

Final composition of the group of science advisors will be based on scientific credentials and availability. Scientists will be selected because they are widely recognized by their peers for technical expertise, have a strong publication record or record of scientific leadership, and are able to function well within a team with objectivity and professionalism. The technical expertise of the SAC should include the following:

- Experience with designing and conducting studies on the effects of wind development on wildlife;
- Study design/biometrics and statistics;
- Avian ecology and behavior (including raptor biology, migratory and flight behavior);
- Bat behavior and ecology;
- Avian/bat population biology/demographics.

The SAC members should be without bias or perceived conflict of interest. However, the pool of technical experts for the SAC may be relatively small and some highly qualified scientists may have been involved in controversial wind development-wildlife issues. A history of participation in controversial wind-development projects or research will not necessarily be a basis for excluding experts from the SAC.